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MARY ANN MCGIVERN

JAN 20 2000

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MS. MCGIVERN: Good afternoon. Thank you for conducting this hearing. I oppose the transport of nuclear waste across the United States. The reasons that I want to present relate to denial and to error which are elements of human nature rather than technology. First, there is no stable permanent site for nuclear waste. If we pretend we have a site and put the waste out of sight, it will be out of mind and we will only postpone research on a better resolution, but we will continue to generate more waste, denying that there's a problem.

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I understand from the Q&A that only a third or perhaps a half of the waste planned for has been generated to date. I urge a halt to waste generation as a remedy of first resort. That's what I would consider a no-action plan. And then second, about human error, as both Gavin Perry and Kay Drey have mentioned, the first nuclear waste was generated in St. Louis on Second Street and Destrahan at the Mallinckrodt Chemical Company. One building there remains sealed off today.

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I live on 17th Street and Mallanphy, about a mile from that site and I'd be glad if that contaminated building could be surgically removed from St. Louis and placed somewhere safe, but residue from that building was carted off to a Latty Avenue site near the airport. Now that site is mounded and partially sealed with concrete, but in the process of shipping the nuclear waste from Destrahan to Latty, a significant amount somehow fell or blew or was dumped off the trucks and lines ditches along McDonnell Boulevard. The effort at waste removal only increased the hazard.

You may say that that was then and we are wiser now. I don't think so. Human beings will always take shortcuts. We will hire the cheapest, least educated labor. We will cheat to make a profit. We will deny the dangers and act with bravado because we are unwilling to face our fears.

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Public hearings are an effort to overcome denial and bring our fears out into the light of day, examine them and make rational decisions. Based on the lack of safe, permanent storage, the continued generation of nuclear waste and the experiences in many places like St. Louis where we live with old errors of judgment, I urge you to face the fear of future calamity realistically. Do not deny this fear. Please, reject current plans to ship nuclear waste across the country.

Thank you.